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Poetry

by Janice Krasselt Medin

Meeting of Minds

There are no secrets here in this room
as I drift, wine in hand,
from one cluster of women to another.
I long to dive into luxurious caves
and feel soft arms around me. Who
could not understand that need?

Like most here, I had a mother who wanted
another kind of daughter—one who
had crushes on boys, giggling over
names like Josh or John, not Rachel
or Sarah. She remained mystified
as I stayed a tomboy, the boys
around me best friends with whom
to shoot pool or rifles, or talk about sports.
But I married, later left that nest
and finally admitted to myself my love
of women. Others here accept
the wallet in my back pocket, my swagger.
Old facades fade, and I have discovered
a love of nurturing the familiar:
the full breasts, soft lips, curves.
How amazing it is to make love to a body
made like mine, to taste the female of myself.

Do Not Resuscitate

The monitor showed 3rd degree block--
a heart rhythm where the atria, the top part
of the heart, beats separately
from the ventricles, the bottom,
like random thoughts,
one thought connecting to another,
the next two or three
escaping the common thread.
The patient was 60 years old,
not a young 60
with kidney and liver disease,
a pacemaker buried inside her chest
like a sunken vessel at sea. Its engine
refused to spark a beat of the ventricle.
We knew she was dying,
her blood pressure like air in a tire
leaking lower and lower, and lungs filling

with fluid. When her heart slowed
to 40 beats a minute, her eyes grew wide.
We couldn't believe her brain received
enough blood to feed her words
"Is this the time to pray?"
We answered in unison, "Yes."

Waking

I marvel how during sleep
we tangle together like a tight braid,
a lovers' knot they call it. Even
when we turn, we always hold on
to each other so we are one.
When we wake at 3 am and talk
as if the night belonged solely to us,
we try to forget in four hours,
we will be swept away from each other.
Your hands touch my breasts, my thighs,
and every time I touch you in return,
the wonder of our first time blossoms
once again, a light both of us
had never seen before. As we
celebrate that first night, we know
the memories of our touches
will return us to the shelter we have made.

Janice Krasselt Medin earned her M.A in English with an emphasis in creative writing from Ohio University. She has had two books of poetry published under the name Janice Tatter: *Remembering the Truth* (Temenos Publishing Company, 2006) and *Communion of Voices* (Big Table Publishing Company, 2009), a chapbook. Medin is now publishing under my new married name. Her poems have appeared in several journals such as the *Yale Journal of Humanities in Medicine*, *Word Riot*, *Honey Land Review*, *Ghoti Magazine*, and others. .

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